Name _____ Number Right _____ **15**

Directions: *You have 4¼ minutes to read the selection and answer the questions. Do not begin reading until your teacher gives the signal.*

Note this word before you begin.

orphan: a child whose mother and father are dead

African-American Explorer

Shortly after the slaves had been set free in our country, an African-American boy, Matthew Henson, was born. When he was nine years old, he became an orphan. He worked hard at different jobs to take care of himself. His favorite job was traveling to other parts of the world as a cabin boy on a ship.

Later when Lieutenant Peary needed another member for his team of explorers, someone suggested Matthew Henson. Lieutenant Peary's choice soon proved to be a good one. Henson quickly learned how to build the large sleds they needed to carry food supplies. He also learned to make the igloos of ice blocks they used as they traveled north trying to reach the North Pole. And he became an expert at handling the sled dogs.

Henson did not give up even when their team faced one problem after another. They ran into severe storms and suffered from frostbite and other injuries. Some members of the team became sick and died. The explorers often ran out of food. They killed walruses whenever possible.

Time after time the team tried to reach the North Pole. Once they came within 500 miles and had to turn back. The most dangerous part of the expedition was crossing the frozen Arctic Sea. They had to cross swift water filled with huge chunks of ice. They decided a ship would be necessary, one that was tough enough to break ice into pieces. After getting such a ship, they started out again. Finally, there was too much ice for the ship to continue. They went on by foot. At last they reached their goal—the North Pole! It was a great moment for Lieutenant Peary and Matthew Henson. They were the first people to accomplish this amazing task!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Circle the correct answer.

1. Matthew Henson was _?_.
   - **a.** a white explorer
   - **b.** an American guide
   - **c.** an Eskimo explorer
   - **d.** an African-American

2. Lieutenant Peary was trying to _?_.
   - **a.** reach the South Pole
   - **b.** reach the North Pole
   - **c.** sail around the world
   - **d.** lead an expedition to Antarctica

3. Before Henson became an explorer, he enjoyed working most _?_.
   - **a.** as a cook
   - **b.** as a carpenter's helper
   - **c.** as a cabin boy on a ship
   - **d.** as a bank clerk

4. The most dangerous part of the expeditions was _?_.
   - **a.** crossing the Arctic Sea
   - **b.** finding enough food to eat
   - **c.** staying warm enough
   - **d.** finding shelter at night

5. What made reaching the North Pole such a great accomplishment?
   - **a.** It hadn't been done in 100 years.
   - **b.** They were the first people to reach it.
   - **c.** It cost so much money, few people could afford to go.
   - **d.** They had to cross through gunfire to get there.

LIVEWORKSHEETS